

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed January 24, 2008 has been reviewed and the Examiner's comments carefully considered. The Examiner's indication that claims 27 and 35 are allowable is noted with appreciation. Claims 23, 26 and 27 have been amended. Therefore, claims 23, 25, 26-28, 29 and 32 remain pending in this application.

Specification

The specification was objected to for not containing section headings. In response, pages 1, 2, 5 and 6 have been amended to include section headings.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 23 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,848,803 ("Tonooka"). Claims 23, 25-26, 28, 29 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,676,147 ("Ozaki"). The rejection should be withdrawn because neither Tonooka nor Ozaki disclose each and every limitation of independent claim 23 as amended.

Independent claim 23 is directed to a passenger airbag module wherein "the length of the web along the side of the gas outlet opening is shorter than the space in the module housing for the folded airbag so that the web partially separates the airbag package." Accordingly, the claimed web partially separates the airbag package. This is possible because the web does not extend over the entire length of the upper part of the housing.

Tonooka discloses an air bag module having guide fins 61 with the spaces in between each guide fin serving as an aperture 62. The Office Action asserts that Tonooka shows that the guide fins (61) extend into the folded airbag (15). However, as shown in the Figures the fins of Tonooka do not extend into the folded airbag. Further, Tonooka does not disclose an airbag module wherein "the length of the web along the side of the gas outlet opening is shorter than the space in the module housing for the folded airbag so that the web partially separates the airbag package." Accordingly, claim 23 is patentable over Tonooka.

Ozaki is also directed to an airbag device. The airbag device of Ozaki includes a plurality of blowoff holes 42 and a partition wall 40. *See* FIG. 1. The Office Action asserts that Ozaki shows a web (40), wherein the length of the web along the side of the gas outlet opening (42) is shorter than the space in the module housing for the folded airbag. However, as shown in Fig. 1, the web (40) is only slightly shorter than the space in the module housing for the folded airbag and the space between the housing and the web is not large enough to store parts of the folded airbag. The partition wall 40 of Ozaki significantly separates one portion of the airbag from another portion. In contrast, amended claim 23 is directed to an airbag module wherein “the length of the web along the side of the gas outlet opening is shorter than the space in the module housing for the folded airbag so that the web partially separates the airbag package.” Accordingly, claim 23 is patentable over Ozaki.

In addition, claims 25, 26-28, 29 and 35 depend from claim 23 and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons set forth above without regard to further patentable limitations contained therein. Thus, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Conclusion

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for

such extension under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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